291 The most prominent and significant change
177 in men's dress in Cherán is not the entry of the *catrín* garments of storekeeper and professional man of the towns, but of the blue denim jeans or overalls of the mechanic and factory worker, the garment of the proletariat. As the con-
[665] trolling group in town is allied to the Partido Revolucionario Mexicano and the Confederacion de Trabajadores Mexicanos, the town officials, including mayor and secretary, often wear over-
[292] alls, reserving their *catrín* clothes for visits to Uruapan or Morelia or for important civic events.

291 The working dress of Cherán males, and the exclusive dress of many, is trousers (*calzones*), shirt or blouse of unbleached muslin (*manta*), straw hat, and sandals (*guaraches*). A blanket or poncho (*serape*) is worn or carried as protection against cold or rain (pls. 3; 4, lower right).

The *calzones* or trousers are tight-fitting in the legs but cut full at the waist with a baggy seat. There are no buttons on the fly; instead of a fastening, the two ample sides of the fly are lapped over each other, and a sash, about 6 inches in width, is wrapped about the waist to hold the trousers. The lower part of the trouser leg has a piece of cloth tape attached which is used to tie the bottom of the *calzones* tightly around the ankle. The shirt, or more properly, blouse, likewise has no buttons. It usually has no tails, or very abbreviated ones, and is usually worn outside the *calzones*. It is open part way down the front and has a roll collar, but neither opening nor collar ordinarily is fastened. Buttons are never used, except in attempts to copy city garments, but strings may be provided. Such fitting as is attempted is badly done. A coat of *manta* may also be worn on special occasions; it differs from the blouse primarily in being open down the front and in being of heavier material. It may also be stitched in bright-colored thread.

Both shirt and coat may be modified by at-
[177] tempt to copy urban models and sometimes are purchased ready-made.

Sandals or *guaraches* have a heavy pointed double thick leather sole and leather heel. Part of the top is of leather pieces nailed to the sole, but the major portion is made of woven leather strips passing through slits in the upper sole

291 and the nailed portions of the uppers. The toe is open. As the manufacture of *guaraches* is practiced by only a few Cherán residents, most of them recent arrivals, no detailed description of techniques is given.

An inseparable part of the costume is the straw hat. From infancy, every male is equipped with a hat, which he always wears outdoors, no matter how inconvenient the circumstances. Awkward jobs, such as carrying heavy timbers, are infinitely delayed because every time a man's hat falls off, the entire operation stops until the hat is replaced. Moreover, the first way in which a man makes an extra "luxury" expenditure in clothing is to buy a more expensive hat. The hat is frequently embellished by a bright-colored string about the front of the crown and, passing through two holes at each side, then going around the back of the head. Flowers also are often worn on the hat. Hat manufacture is described under weaving.

From the above-described working costume, many departures occur. Without achieving *catrin* styles, a gay and well-dressed man may wear a brilliant rayon blouse or shirt of blue, red, or yellow, and bright-yellow high shoes (the latter without socks). A brilliant rayon kerchief may be added, as well as a colorful *serape* or poncho, although in Cherán the latter is usually dull in color. In such a town as [292] Capacuaro, however, Sunday or fiesta dress might consist of *calzones* of *manta* supported by a brilliant red sash, a vivid blue rayon shirt, bright green rayon kerchief, yellow shoes, a striking orange or strong pink poncho folded over one shoulder, and a large whitened straw hat with a big spray of pink gladiolus or a cluster of geraniums. Worn with an air, the ensemble is impressive.

In Cherán a good many men have shirts bought in market or in Uruapan; a necktie; a pair or two of cotton trousers, perhaps made by a tailor in Uruapan; a woolen sack coat; and a felt hat. Such a costume normally would be worn on Sunday or on trips by bus to Uruapan or some other town. Very rare, though, are individuals with a complete wool suit. Sweaters are fairly common for lounging about home or on the streets.

The dress of male children is similar to that

296 When the skirt is washed, two women fold in the pleats while the material is still damp. It is then laid flat to dry or clamped between two or three pairs of sticks which project beyond the sides of the skirt and are tied together. The same device is often used when the skirt is not being worn.

291 When both skirt and petticoat are worn, a [854] ridge of cloth extends across the middle of the back large enough for a small child to sit on, held by his mother's shawl. The thickness of cloth is also folded under when a woman sits on the ground, creating a seat quite as high as the low stools or chairs used by men. When walking, the skirt barely clears the ground and only glimpses may be caught of the colored band of the petticoat. In rainy weather or on muddy roads the skirt becomes wet and muddy. In the Lake Pátzcuaro region, not only is the skirt worn a little shorter, but it is often hitched up nearly to the knees by using one of the many belts to loop up part of the cloth at the back into a bustle-shaped bundle. In the same area, skirts are often of red plaid materials and the upper part is made of lighter materials, making the thickness of the folds at the waist much less.

The *rebozo*, or shawl, is an inseparable part of the costume. The everyday *rebozo*, and the only one owned by poor women, is a hand-loomed cotton fabric from Paracho or Nahuatzen. The color is dark blue with fine light-blue or white longitudinal stripes. The color is from indigo dye. A tasseled fringe some 4 inches in length finishes the ends.

292 For special occasions, women who can afford [438] them wear a much finer gray or blue cotton *rebozo* from Tangancicuaro. Such *rebozos* may [435] cost from 10 to 60 pesos or more, and the finer specimens can be drawn through a finger ring. An elaborate netted fringe 8 or 10 inches long is waxed to make it stiff. Some fine *rebozos* have a thin stripe, but the main effect is of a pepper-and-salt mixture.

291 The *rebozo* is sometimes worn over the head as a protection against rain, sunshine, or cold, or to hide the face partly if the wearer is embarrassed. At such times a fold may be drawn across the lower part of the face and caught in the teeth. Much of the time, however, the *rebozo* is worn as a shawl. Children [492] or small objects are slung on the back in a fold of the *rebozo*. (pl. 2, upper right and left.)

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PLATE 10.—Cucuchuo. Pottery making at Cucuchuo (continued). *g* and *h*, Rolled pieces of clay are worked into sides of vessel. *i*, Sides of vessel are smoothed with corncob. *j* and *k*, Lip of vessel being shaped. *l*, The finished ollo. The vessel was made in about 30 minutes.

[End-plate 10]

535 796 [532] known as the caballita uaiárica dance of the little horses. The figures of horses are made of withes from certain plants, with openings in the middle in which the girls stand. The head is made so it can move, and the dance consists mostly of the girls standing and moving the horses' heads in time to the music. Again, little attention is paid to the dance, and the *carguero* often does not arrange to have it performed.

In connection with the fiesta of the Virgin of Guadalupe, the *carguero* ordinarily arranges a dance known as the uáris. The dancers consist simply of unmarried girls and young women who dress in the traditional costume but perhaps with a few more ornaments than usual. They dance the usual Cherán fiesta dance in the streets.

DANCES IN OTHER TOWNS

Only a few dances were observed or learned of in other towns. The *pastorela* of Capacuaro was the most thoroughly studied, but the data remain superficial and unrelated to the ceremonial setting. The dancers are connected with the *carguero* for the December 25th ceremonies. A pole is erected in his patio with a large paper lantern suspended from the top (this is done by the kéri at Cherán, but use of this term was denied at Capacuaro) and a stage is erected at one end of the patio on which some of the *relatos* are given. The house is also decorated with paper flowers and pine boughs. A table altar on the porch has a *creche* with miniature figures. The dancers appear for 3 days at Christmas and again on January 1. On Christmas Eve it is claimed that they perform a very long *colloquio*, lasting 18 hours without repetition, on the stage at the *carguero's* house. Doubt of this statement seems indicated.

292 535 796 The dancers consist of between 35 and 40 *ranheritas* and *rancheritos*, boys and girls of 8 to12. In addition, there were two "hermits" or *hermitaños*, dressed as friars with gray robes and a conical cap. They wore a rosary and carried a whip, serving, among other functions, as police (pl. 6, upper right). Two *Europeos* [532] were dressed in white wooden masks with long blonde wigs of goat hair, citified clothes, and boots (pl. 6, lower right). Three "devils" or

1:Beals E-5 (1940-1941)1946 NU34 Tarasco NU34
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[p.155a]

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"demons" were dressed in black, wearing a crown of feathers on the back of the head, with a black veil over most of the face. The devils bore such names as "cunning," *astucia*. Some of the dancers were dressed as ranchers. Two small boys represented angels (one, Michael, with a sword), but the majority were dressed in shepherd's costumes. The girls wore loose blouses, fairly long full skirts, straw hats with ribbons, and shoes. The boys wore satin blouses and bloomers, stockings, shoes, and straw hats. Pinks, blues, and whites predominated in the costumes. Both sexes carried shepherd's crooks, decorated with celluloid animals, ribbons, balls of yarn, and feathers.

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The performance begins with a long *relato* by the devils in which they talk about a journey they are going to make, the curious things they are going to see, etc. Then a *ranchera* and a *ranchero* dance a *jarabe*. The other *rancheros* supervise the two files of children. Then there is a *relato* by the dancers. Then the dancers give their crooks to friends or relatives and dance. The *Europeos* dance about the files of children alone or occasionally with the hermits. The devils and the hermits, on the other hand, constantly engage in byplay, pursuing one another. Occasionally one or two of the devils will capture a hermit and force him to dance along with them. Also, from time to time the hermits use their whips to keep the children from crowding in too much on the dancers.

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The *hermitaños* were special buffoons. One was seen "praying" before the church with his hands together but with both thumbs to his nose. Boys threw bits of stick or pebbles at them; the *hermitaños* would threaten the crowd with their whips or if they identified the offender, would pursue him with their whips—and sometimes used them if the stones had been too big.

The dances are performed first in front of the church before the saints' images, which are brought out of the church for this. Then the dancers eat in the house of the *carguero*, after which they dance. Then they go to various houses and dance. The householders give them fruit, sugarcane, peanuts, or other small gifts. Then they return to the house of the *carguero* to eat once more.

7: Kaplan E-5 (1948)1951 NU34 Tarasco NU34
Sierra Tarascans

chosen was born in another community and another was technically illegitimate—since her parents, although living together for many years, had never been wed either in civil or religious ceremony. The Huananchas came from all quarters of the pueblo. Participation itself, through enabling one to be among those directly concerned with "making the holiday," may well have been a means of acquiring prestige in the community. The Huananchas *may* have been chosen in the same manner as were the *Cargueros* (the officers of the trade groups) in the past. That is, a committee decided who should participate and then notified those nominated; these people might then beg off if they had good arguments. This was the procedure outlined for naming the *Cargueros* who were then responsible for organizing the various trade groups in past years, however no specific comments were made about the manner of choice of the Huananchas.

In the dance all of the little girls wore pink satin or sateen dresses. These apparently were made for the occasion. On their heads they wore gilded crowns with brightly colored artificial flowers attached. The elegance of each dancer's dress and the number of sprays of flowers on her crown were subjects of much comparison, both by the dancers themselves and by their mothers. It was observed that one of the dancers was visibly distressed over some unkindly comments about her hair which was not curled like that of the others, and because her crown bore fewer flowers. There is thus an informal, but effective, status ranking of the dancers and their families in terms of the costumes worn.

In the dance the four biggest girls—representing those who formerly used to carry the image of the Virgin—form a rectangle. Between them are the three shorter and younger girls. (See "a," Fig. 1). We were told that the center dancer of these last three represents the pennant bearer and is supposed to carry a blue pennant. She is known as *Pendonpasi*. One of the others was supposed to carry copal or incense, and the third one a candle. Actually, the dancers carried nothing when they performed in 1948. It is probable that the description given really refers to what the Huananchas used to carry in processions, and not what they held in their hands during the dance.

The only step for the entire dance is an extremely slow and, to the outsider, monotonous "simple" but the patterns which the dancers perform vary.[5] When dancing in the town hall for the various political and other officials the performance continued for approximately 45 minutes; at other times the dance was limited to about 20 minutes by elimination of the repetition of the various patterns. In the town hall and elsewhere the girls were surrounded on all sides by observers during their performance. In the description which follows, "front" refers to the two dancers closest to the officials, "back," to the two dancers farthest from the guests of honor. The three other dancers form a center row. All dancers face the guests of honor most of the time.

The dance begins with all seven girls making two very slow turns in place in

[5] René Barragán y Luis Arturo González Bonilla, *op. cit.*, p. 174. Here the authors have the following to say about a religious dance which they observed in the Internado in Paracho: "The dances are very prolonged and they always last several hours, accompanied by a terribly monotonous music." (Translated from the Spanish).

11: Boyd H-4, 5 (1953) 1958
NU34 Tarasco NU34

THE LEGENDS

539 [128] [173] [167] The eight Tarascan legends have been arranged in their presumed historical sequence. The creation myth is followed by a legendary account of tribal wanderings until the beautiful and abundant land, Michoacán, was reached.

[175] Next are four love stories explaining natural features of the countryside. The first of these belongs to the period of intertribal wars (1200-1400 A.D.) which eventually consolidated the empire. The second is a simple folk tale explaining the origin of an important spring. Rivalry between political and religious power may be perceived in the third. The fourth reflects palace intrigue and the problems of succession to the throne.

[648] The final two legends deal with the coming of the Spaniards. The first one prophesies their coming and the second presents a rationalization of the Conquest.

[128] The legends are preceded by short notes which place them in historical perspective.

THE BIRTH OF CUERÓHPERI

Historical Comment

539 805 [175] The Tarascans, like other cultured peoples of Mexico and Central America, had knowledge of the calendar. In the *Relación de Michoacán*, a work written probably in 1540-41 by an anonymous Franciscan priest, the names of fourteen of the eighteen Tarascan months of twenty days each are mentioned, and for four of the months the corresponding date in the Christian calendar is given (Caso, 1943).

539 786 793 173 292 At the fiesta of *Uazcata cónscuaro* (on June 27,) the chief priest, dressed in full pompous regalia, related the history of the nation and its princes.

11: Boyd H-4, 5 (1953) 1958
NU34 Tarasco NU34

were the four orbs residing in the heavens.

Huriata daily glittered in the sky, but the Purépecha represented him symbolically with three concentric circles which signified his union with the moon at the moment they created Cueróhperi. The lovely daughter of wisdom, Cueróhperi, was represented as standing nude with her long hair gathered in the form of a crown, with her hands resting beneath her breasts offering perpetual nourishment, and with her womb always ready to give forth fruit. In her they saw nature, to whose immutable laws all things are obedient.

Dance of the Viejitos

Related to the above legend is the still famous Dance of the Viejitos (little old men). It has its origins in the ancient past, but how old it is no one knows. Such a dance existed before the days of the Conquest, and the influence of the legend of creation is discernible in it.

The dancers of the Tarascan villages around Lake Pátzcuaro (Fig. 1) carry heavy staffs with an animal's head carved on the handle. They wear white cotton trousers, tunics with red sashes tied at the side, wide-brimmed hats with low crowns, and painted wooden masks depicting old faces.

The musician directs the dancing *viejitos*, usually youths, who dance collectively and individually, each trying to outdo the other in steps and clowning. In one of their serious figures, called "the cross of the four stars," the dancers form four files, each pointing in one of the cardinal directions. The four stars presumably represent the four orbs within which was the abode of Curicaueri.

In the little village of Petamba, sometimes as many as forty *viejitos* take part. One dancer wears a mask of a pretty white face, symbolic of Cutzi, the moon goddess (Locke, 1956, p. 372, illustrates this mask). The dancers form two files and each one dances with the woman wearing the white mask; then they form a great circle around her; next, in pairs, they pay reverential respect to